



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE MUSICAL TIMES, And Singing Class Circular.

JUNE 1st, 1859.

TEACHERS & METHODS OF TEACHING.*

By Dr. MARX. Translated by GEORGE MACIRONE.

It is manifest that, in order to attain the object of musical education, the choice of a teacher is highly important to the student, while the choice of the most sure method of teaching is equally so to the master. So many parents know not how to help themselves in this regard—so many respectable well-intentioned teachers are anxious to ascertain and rectify, if needful, their methods of proceeding—so many scholars have already been led astray or ruined, in a musical sense, either by a mistaken choice or an erroneous system, that we have considered it to be our duty to suggest a few hints on this subject. We give only a few hints on the principal points applicable to the matter in general. A fundamental improvement cannot be arrived at by a book; it must be the result of a more elevated education of the teachers, by institutions of the state, and through a real enlightenment of all educated persons on the nature and necessity of music.

The profession of music is highly important, from the powerful influence this science exercises on our senses and on our spiritual and civil life. Parents should weigh well, in the choice of a teacher, what power is given him through his art over the mind of their child; that he may elevate the youthful mind to the most noble sentiments, or defile and lower it to the most grovelling: how prejudicial it is merely to leave the mind vacant, while music is acting irresistibly upon the senses and the mind. Listlessness, thoughtlessness, sensuality, vanity, unbridled passion, may be implanted and fostered by the teacher of music; but we may also be indebted to him for awakening and cherishing the noblest powers and sentiments of the soul.

From the foregoing, it would appear that the weightiest point to be considered, in the choice of a music master, is, what influence may be expected from him on the mind of his scholar. His good manners, however necessary, are no sufficient guarantee for suitability. But, indeed, the high and pure sense in which he has formed his conception of art, and the degree of his general capability and education, which enables him to transfer his conception to his pupil,—all this must be maturely pondered. But the choice made, boldly and with full confidence give free hand to the teacher. Half confidence, interference in the instruction, would only disturb the efficiency of the master.

We must, therefore, with regard to music, consider, in the first place, what view the teacher

takes of it, and what motive urges him in its employment. The mere technical man, who uses art simply as handicraft, will produce nothing but a handicraftsman. The player, from understanding, will give cold lessons and perceptions; he can give technicality with ease and certainty, but he will never warm the heart with inward fire: he will rather rob it of its natural warmth. The mere man of feeling will perhaps allow the scholar to sympathise in company with him, but never insist upon sure instruction. Art is not mere technicality, nor mere understanding, nor mere feeling. It is the expression of the whole man; and only he who embraces it in its entirety can ingraft and rear its true nature and power. Talent and knowledge, a feeling heart, and a rational consciousness of the reality of the nature and operations of art—these are the indispensable qualities of a teacher of music. One of the signs of his artistic standing—we must repeat a former observation—is the works at which he and his scholar are employed. A teacher who occupies himself with small worthless compositions, in lieu of the abundant masterpieces of our art, shows the inferiority of his position, and a poor estimate of art. There are, indeed, masters who limit themselves to approved works, on the sole authority of the name, without taking any lively interest in them; in this case, certainly, their instruction can be but of small benefit. The next general qualification which a teacher indispensably requires, is the faculty of working with decision and effect on the mind and disposition of his pupil. The mere capability of playing himself a piece of music with propriety and effect, does not here suffice. It may delight the scholar, it may move or excite him, it may induce him to a successful imitation, and even, perhaps, finally to a more or less noble and happy manner; but will not create in himself a free independent feeling, and conscious certainty in art. It is not necessary only that the teacher should enable the scholar to play whole compositions as he does himself, but that he lead him into the composition itself—that he enable him to see and comprehend thoroughly each unity therein, their combination and mutual dependence, and their constitution as a whole. A bright consciousness only of the nature of art, and of the contents of each work of art, advances the pupil to a free comprehension and performance peculiar to himself, and conducts him by his own productions to the summit where individuality of the artist and nature of the art join in conscious union, and give style to his creations. Only such a method of instruction works beyond the circle of lessons which he has run through. If the scholar has seized the essence of the matter, he will not hold it fast in studies and forms only, which the teacher has worked out with him; he will seek and seize it everywhere equally when the master is absent. This is the true life in art; this alone guarantees that the exercise of art will not cease with instruction, but will adorn the

* From Dr. Marx's *General Musical Instruction*. J. A. Novello, London and New York.

whole of life. For this object there is required, on the part of the teacher, deep insight, extensive knowledge, and in both such ability and certainty that he can comprehend and explain his subjects under all their aspects. A teacher must know more, much more than he is required to teach; he must be everywhere at-home, and perfectly master of his subject, in order to be able to answer every question, and supply every unnoticed deficiency.

After the elementary and technical instruction, we require absolutely from a good singing and piano master the study of composition, as the most sure, if not the only means of penetrating with full consciousness into the recesses of art. We require of him an extensive and well-grounded knowledge of the masterpieces of art of the elder and modern times; and strongly recommend a continually observant and sympathizing eye on new productions, in order to acquire every movement in artistic life, even although masses of unsuccessful or retrograde composition should make the duty burthensome. The higher teacher, especially one who is concerned in the education of composers and teachers or conductors, ought not to delay his acquaintance with the history of art and the science of music, besides his study of fundamental composition; since everything, and therefore music, can be perfectly known and fully understood only by the help of its history.

To the properly artistic capacity and education must be added the knowledge of mankind, and the talent of working upon the mind of others; but then, also, love of the business of instruction, and a heartfelt interest in the advancement of the scholar. An able master studies the disposition and inclination of his pupil. He judges from them, how he may be won, how convinced, upon what qualities he may rely, where he wants assistance, and by what other powers his deficiencies may be compensated. He does not consider himself as another being, foreign to his pupil; he neither presumes on his own superiority, nor lowers himself to his pupil (both false methods of teaching), but penetrates with his higher ideas and education into the mental condition of his pupil; comprehends, as it were, from the soul of the young disciple the conceptions he has acquired of art and its forms; he here separates, by his superior knowledge, the true and healthy from the false and insufficient; he encourages, expands, and exalts the former, and corrects and amplifies the latter. In short, he endeavours to originate or unravel every desirable faculty in the pupil himself, because only that which is engendered in and grows out from ourselves, not that which is brought to us from without, is vital, and works with the energy of life.

Such a teacher will lose courage only in the case of total indifference or absolute incapacity; or much rather, with our feelings, he would decline the scholar. But each single deficiency,

every erroneous or one-sided conception, he knows how to meet. If the feeling of measure cannot be trusted, or is perhaps confused by earlier teachers, the master will prescribe very simple lessons of determined rhythm, and then make rhythmic, melodic variations on them, so that the pupil will proceed on the same simple lesson from simple rhythm to more rich, placed together and increasing in difficulty. If the sense of *tone* be undeveloped, the teacher will apply the earlier to the practice of chords; first the major triad, then the chord of the dominant, lastly the major and minor chords of the ninth (major chords always before minor) by ear on the piano, and then have them sung by the pupil. For since those chords are the first indications given by nature herself, one of her *tones* helps the imperfect feeling of *tone* in the student, to the other; and the most important intervals, such as the octave, fifth, fourth, major and minor third, minor seventh, whole tone and semitone, will be gained from the laws of nature. If the scholar has a strong partiality for brilliant and off-hand playing, the teacher will fall in with this inclination (since to oppose it abruptly would rather alarm than overcome), and by gradually shading the passages, separating and binding, changing the *forte* and *piano*, &c., in a manner comprehensible and agreeable to the scholar, he will make the latter perceive how one and the same passage may, by different playing, become newer, more attractive, now more neat and delicate, and then more forcible, &c. It will now be easy to take a more noble direction from this point, and to awaken the deep sense of melody. Should the intelligent element assume a pre-eminence, let us profit by it to comprehend and seize with more intimate feeling, accentuation, which is the nearest associate to rhythm, in relation to the understanding. Let us penetrate, as at page 43, into the innumerable degrees of accentuation, and awaken thereby the conviction that musical matters are not exclusively the business of the understanding, but that it is often necessary to trust to feeling only. Hence it is easy to see that feeling must have free operation, and participates of right in musical composition and performance. If, on the other hand, the scholar should be inclined, perhaps from enthusiasm, to devote himself to the unknown feeling, let that noble power of the soul be respected and upheld which lies at the foundation of this one-sidedness. Let us apply to heartfelt compositions, and with preference to those whose effect has been already experienced, and point out the chief traits which have caused our emotion; illustrate occasionally such passages, by comparison with similar or dissimilar instances, or by changes which would rob us of our power or tenderness. Should our sensibilities be excited, as is generally the case with superabundant feeling, by melody, chiefly or exclusively, we will apply gradually to movements in which a captivating chief melody is met by a leading passage

full of character, or where two or more highly interesting melodies combine and proceed together. In so far as the pupil, either by himself, or induced by the teacher, can be brought to notice in each of the significant parts that which has hitherto exclusively occupied him, he is on the way to elevate himself above the one-sided, obscure, and overworked feeling, to a higher consciousness, to a more comprehensive and fruitful spiritual sympathy.

It is impossible here to accumulate all the counsels and advantages arising from a perfect intimacy of the master with the mind of the pupil. It is enough, if, from a few examples, we have made ourselves clearly understood.

That there are now but few teachers, such as we require for so many scholars, is true. But this is, however, no refutation of the justice of our demands; it is only a sign of the insufficiency of our supplies for the requirements of our consciences; and proves a concurrent striving for a recognized good, according to our power. It cannot also be denied, that often persons, clear-sighted enough in general, instead of selecting the obtainable good masters, procure others far from proficiency, out of thoughtlessness, want of knowledge of the parties, or other secondary considerations. Here, however, the reproach falls on the musicians and teachers themselves, who have given themselves but little trouble in enlightening the public in general on the true nature of their art and the means of acquiring it—a conviction which has had great part in the production of this book.

We must also notice another erroneous idea concerning instruction. It is the deceptive notion, often repeated, that for the beginning an inferior teacher is sufficient. This persuasion often arises from the wish to save for some time the cost of a good master. But we must consider this opinion as an erroneous delusion. The unskilled master lays a bad foundation. He delays the fundamental elements and exercises upon which all future progress must be founded. He neglects the awakening and expansion of the natural dispositions, gives a false direction to all artistic procedure, and misuses or destroys the pleasure and activity of the scholar. The succeeding better master finds the scholar half tired out with wandering hither and thither without profit or reward. He meets everywhere with only imperfect or false preparation, and he finds difficulty enough in exciting attention and activity in the scholar for the attainment of an object of which this latter imagines himself to be already possessed. What teacher, under these circumstances (and they are of frequent occurrence), does not wish that no instruction had been given—that he might freely and with good heart build upon fresh and unencumbered ground? and how many a gifted scholar has abandoned art in disgust, when he has discovered, after years of labour, that, in order to succeed, he must begin again from the beginning.

In conclusion, it is the method itself of teaching which claims our consideration. In this matter, after every necessary qualification as to ability, we will limit ourselves to one fundamental requisition, which seems to us important and comprehensive, and which to the reflective teacher will develop itself so advantageously in every direction, however simply it may be expressed. The teacher must constantly bear in mind that he teaches an art. Consequently, he must treat his scholar and the subject of his teaching in the sense of an artist and of art, and prove himself to be an artist.

He must also constantly show to his scholar that love and respect which are due to his fellow artist, and to everyone engaged in higher and intellectual occupations.

He will foster and elevate the disposition of the pupil for art. Artistic activity must flow spontaneously from the heart, if it is to fructify into life: we cannot force even ourselves into its possession, much less others. The pleasure we derive from it is therefore the first and indispensable condition of all success in this region; and the teacher who knows not how to preserve and increase it will certainly miss his aim. He must, however, awaken true pleasure in the art itself; not false pleasure—vanity, desire for reward or profit; and, in order, indeed, that the student may become constantly more susceptible of her pleasures, and more capable of producing them, he must moreover excite his pupil to a worthy use of his powers by an encouraging word, by a well-timed performance of the works of art, &c.

The following point is most worthy of consideration. Art is not abstract thinking,—it is not feeling without thought nor unconscious activity; neither should the teaching be an abstract combination. Every lesson, every rule, must be derived from nature herself before the eyes of the pupil, and immediately, if by any means possible, reduced to practice. That this is practicable in teaching composition, we think we have shown from the fact in our *Doctrine of Composition*. It was one of the most unartistic aspects of the earlier art of teaching, when all possible intervals and all possible chords were thrown before the pupil in a heap together, and then all the forms of counterpoint in small unartistic passages, before the application of any of them was sought for. Most, indeed, of the books of instruction give no application at all. Nature and the history of art point out another way. Wherever a free course has been open to reason, she has immediately proceeded to the absolutely necessary, and in art to the actual practice, without delay. She has followed reflection by holding fast that which the moment required, and so in every instance she has elevated her mode of action into consciousness, her thoughts into living incarnated operation. Such also has been the development of art—entirely according to reason,

proceeding by facts, by real operation, as her history, properly understood, demonstrates.

Also, in the practice of music, this fundamental proposition is thoroughly practicable. The tonal system, the system of notation, the arrangements of rhythm, are so entirely according to reason, that every scholar, under the gentlest guidance of the teacher, can unfold them further from their first intimations, and can again discover them for himself. It appears to us one of the crudities of the usual mode of teaching, to burden the scholar with the whole tonal system at once, then (or even before, as some books of instruction do*) with the whole system of notation (and perhaps in several clefs at the same time), then with the whole system of bars, while for the moment he wants only the smallest part of them; such as a few notes in one clef, leaving the remainder to be acquired on further advancement. By this misapplication, the scholar is withdrawn from immediate living and improving comprehension to an unartistic work of memory. It follows, therefore, that the order of these books of instruction, which merely present the materials of instruction to the memory, should also illustrate and complete their work; and not doing so, can have no claim to be considered an order or plan of really practical instruction.

Even the exercises, whose immediate object is to produce readiness of hand and voice, must not only be brought into the service of the hand and the observant understanding, but also be used for the pleasurable feelings of the scholar, whenever practicable, so that what he has learned may as soon as possible be applied in artistic form. From these considerations, we cannot look without hesitation upon an invention lately introduced, to make beginners practise upon finger-boards made of paper. However convenient and cheap this may appear, it is evident that artistic participation must be injured, or, to say the least, not excited or vivified.

This is the true doctrine, which, in the smallest and the greatest, holds fast and advances the reality of art, and upholds the student from the lowest up to the pinnacle—however high he may be able and willing to climb—in perfect artistic sympathy and activity. But this is possible only to a teacher who, himself an artist, is replete with the spirit of art.

* They therefore teach the sign before the thing signified, so that their notation is objectless, and must remain incomplete until we become acquainted with tones.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A Singing Master desires our opinion respecting the "morality" of the words of a certain English song, and says he has been found fault with, for giving it to a young lady pupil. The words are not worse than a thousand other love ditties, and might be sung by any lady if it pleased her to do so; but we think it highly objectionable for a singing master to place such impassioned love effusions in the hands of his young pupils.

We cannot undertake to return offered contributions; the authors, therefore, will do well to retain copies.

We would request those who send us country newspapers, wishing us to read particular paragraphs, to mark the passage, by cutting a slip in the paper near it.

The late hour at which Advertisements reach us, interferes much with their proper classification.

Colored Envelopes are sent to all Subscribers whose payment in advance is exhausted. The paper will be discontinued where the Subscriber neglects to renew. We again remind those who are disappointed in getting back numbers, that only the music pages are stereotyped, and of the rest of the paper, only sufficient are printed to supply the current sale.

Notices of concerts and other information supplied by our friends in the country, must be forwarded as early as possible after the occurrence, otherwise they cannot be inserted. Our correspondents must specifically denote the date of each concert, for without such date no notice can be taken of the performance. All communications must be authenticated by the proper name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication.

Musical Contributions.—We take this opportunity of thanking many of our friends for their kindness in offering us musical compositions for publication, but it is right to state that it would be quite inconsistent with our arrangements to entertain any offer of this nature.

Brief Chronicle of the last Month.

AMERSHAM.—On the 25th of April, the Amersham Harmonic Society, assisted by several friends, under the direction of Mr. W. H. Birch, performed a miscellaneous selection of sacred and secular music. The choruses were sung with spirit, and the solos with taste and expression. Miss E. West and Miss Jenkinson assisted as soloists.

BIRMINGHAM.—On Tuesday, May 3rd, the Birmingham Amateur Harmonic Association gave a public concert, at the Music Hall, in aid of the Building Fund of the Birmingham and Midland Institute. The principal vocalists were Madame Weiss, Mrs. Hayward, Mr. Wilbye Cooper, and Mr. Weiss. The choral music by the members of the Association. Organist, Mr. Stimpson. Conductor, Mr. A. J. Sutton. The programme comprised Mendelssohn's "Fest Gesang," the tenor song, "Be thou faithful," from *St. Paul*; Mendelssohn's soprano solo and chorus, "Hear my prayer;" Callcott's *Last Man*; Haydn's First Mass; and Sterndale Bennett's cantata, the *May Queen*.—Mr. DABBS' concert took place in the Music Hall on the 12th of May, when the principal performers were Mrs. Sunderland, Mrs. Tompson, Mr. Bickley, and Mr. W. T. Briggs. Mr. Taylor presided at the pianoforte, and Mr. Dabbs conducted. Above 2000 persons were present, and the music was well selected and ably performed. The choral pieces deserved the highest praise.

BRENTWOOD.—A new Philharmonic Society has been formed in this town, which bids fair to obtain great success. Above forty ladies and gentlemen have joined it, and at a public concert lately given of sacred and secular music, the performance was very creditable. Mr. Brown presided at the harmonium.

BRIERLEY HILL.—A miscellaneous concert was given here, in the School-room, on Easter Tuesday, on behalf of the Drum and Fife Band, in connection with the Mechanics' Institute. The vocalists engaged were Miss Poyzer, and Mr. G. Mainwaring. The Brierley Hill Sax Horn Band played several pieces during the evening.

BURY (Lancashire).—The Choral Society gave their sixth and last concert of the season, on the 10th of May, in the Athenæum, to a numerous audience. Mrs. Sunderland and Mr. D. Lambert (of the Chapel Royal, Windsor) were the principal vocalists, assisted by a well selected choir. The performance by the chorus was such as to call forth especial praise. Mr. Banks conducted.

CANTERBURY.—A vocal and instrumental concert was given on the 4th of May, by Messrs. Lyon and Gough, at the Music Hall, which was patronised by the principal gentry of the town. The artists were Mrs. G. A. Cooper, Miss M. Rudersdorff, Messrs. Cooper, Harrison, Young, Lyon, and Gough, who acquitted themselves to the entire satisfaction of a crowded audience.—Mr. LONGHURST'S concert at the Music Hall, on the 9th of May, was thronged by a crowded audience, and numbers were unable to gain admittance. The band and orchestra was

(Continued on page 67.)